



Washington State Department of Agriculture News Release

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WASHINGTON STATE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

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WSDA seeking proposals to reduce trade barriers, promote agriculture markets

OLYMPIA – Nearly \$500,000 is available to promote Washington agriculture by reducing trade barriers and finding new ways to market the state's agricultural commodities.

The funds were approved earlier this year by the state Legislature. The state Department of Agriculture was directed to spend the money on projects that will reduce agricultural trade barriers and promote new markets. Eligible candidates for the grant funds include commodity commissions, public entities, associations, or nonprofit organizations.

The state funds will be spent over the next two years. The first round of grants for \$243,750 will be awarded for the 2006 fiscal year, which is July 1, 2005 through June 30, 2006. The second round of grants will take place in the 2007 fiscal year.

"We're looking for innovative, substantive ideas on how we can promote Washington's agricultural products and increase the profitability of the agriculture and food processing industry," said Janet Leister, WSDA Marketing Program manager.

The recommended range for grant requests is \$10,000 to \$15,000. Projects that have received funding in the past include the Washington Apple Commission's request for legal fees to defend the U.S. Commerce Department's anti-dumping rules against imported Chinese apple juice concentrate or the Washington Fruit Commission's proposal to promote cherries and other Washington food products in Malaysia. The Puget Sound Gillnet Salmon Commission also received funds to develop a brand identity for Washington wild salmon.

Those applying should be able to provide either matching funds or in-kind contributions. The application deadline is Oct. 10. Successful applicants must complete their project by June 30.

For questions contact Leister, at (360) 902-1931 or e-mail jleister@agr.wa.gov. Application packets are available on the WSDA Web site at www.agr.wa.gov/marketing/ or by contacting Leisa Schumaker at (360) 902-1926 or lschumaker@agr.wa.gov.

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